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CLASS EXERCISES IN FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR

Submitted by

Irma Frances Connell
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First Reader: Donald D. Durrell, Professor of Education

Second Reader: Helen A. Murphy, Assistant Professor of Education

Third Reader:

INTRODUCTION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction to the Problem

The Problem: To interest students in making immediate and effective use of sentences without a detailed study of grammar.

An increasing number of educators have been investigating the possibility of teaching English without unnecessary emphasis on grammar. They feel that grammatical terms have often proved a barrier between the pupil and his effective use of the English language. It is not that all terms would be omitted, but when their need is indicated, they would be used as "labels" and not "to conceal the contents."

To many a pupil there seems a vast distance between sentence study and composition writing. He may learn to analyze correctly, but there seems to be little relation between formal drill and the theme he is about to write or the talk that he is to present. Perhaps structural difficulties encountered in class and overcome with the help of a technical vocabulary may seem too intricate and involved to use in an ordinary assignment. Grammar and composition may appear to be two isolated studies lacking synthesis. Because of this apparent distance between theory and application, motivation of the grammar lesson is at times difficult. There seems to be little immediate use for the facts learned other than to correct a few sentences in the textbook.

Doubtless, there are terms which are essential tools of understanding for the pupil, but the investigation of this phase has not been undertaken in this thesis. Rather, various devices and exercises that purposely avoid a grammatical nomenclature have been presented. It is possible to use a full grammatical vocabulary in teaching the various sentences, but that has not been the purpose of this paper. The aim has been, as the problem suggests, to make immediate transfer from device to composition which a strictly grammatical presentation might preclude. The object is first to attract the pupil's interest through sentences which he may find amusing. The next step is to show him that the whole sentence situation is less involved and eminently more useful than he had thought.

The apparent success of accelerated foreign language courses would also suggest the possibility of simplified methods in the teaching of English. It is very true that the pressure of military needs introduces a motivation with which English teachers could never hope to compete. However, when the army plan has been divested of necessity, there is still the nucleus of an idea that is worth investigating.

If the need for a detailed study of grammar is felt, this could be supplied later to those who would benefit. In fact, such a course might be more meaningful to

those taking it because they would have a clearer perception of the terms, and, therefore, greater facility in manipulating the sentence elements thus indicated.

CHAPTER I

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS INVESTIGATIONS

Introduction to the Investigation

Investigation in the field of teaching English without the unnecessary use of grammar has been receiving some attention in educational magazines. Writers do not necessarily agree, but the following articles show that there is much energetic thinking concerning the problem of grammar.

The Elementary English Review
Vol. XXI, No. 5, May 1944, 168-174

"Common-Sense in the Teaching of Grammar"
by Walter V. Kaulfers

The author bases his methods contained in this paper on the hypothesis that poor English usage is based upon the child's environment. With these circumstances in mind, it is possible to improve the language standard only by increasing the opportunities for pupils to hear good English and by affording them many audience situations as incentive for their own use of correct speech.

Kaulfers suggests devices and the reproduction of life situations to fulfill the need of a satisfactory language environment. Spontaneous dramatizations corrected both by the teacher and the class, followed by a written "reminder" device develop a situation that is decidedly helpful in improving individual language usage. Grammatical labels are omitted at first because they might build a barrier between the child and language, or because they might sidetrack his thoughts. Workbooks are useful if the sentences are like the pupils' own; on the other hand, a great deal is gained if the illustrations originate with the class. In either case class discussion is imperative.

The author decidedly holds no brief for grammar which distracts the pupil's attention and interest from the correct use of the language. For those who protest, he

cites the fact that no objective investigation has ever supported their contentions. As for the case of English grammar as a basis for the study of foreign languages, this, too, seems equally unfounded. Even with his understanding of the need for reform, Kaulfers realizes that complete reform will take a long time. In the meantime he suggests that the cause would be materially aided if people stopped "adoring" grammar.

The School Review
Vol. LII, No. 8, October 1944, pp.470-477

"Do We Need to Teach Grammar?"
by Karl W. Dykema (Youngstown College)

The historical aspect of this article is particularly interesting in view of the fact that there has been so much vehement discussion about grammar. Dykema starts with Sir Philip Sidney's An Apologie for Poetrie and shows that the poet did not believe in what we speak of as formal grammar. In fact, Shakespeare, Chaucer, Milton, and Spenser were untouched by grammatical instruction in their mother-tongue. He quotes from Goold Brown--whose original quotation will be noted later on in this paper--to show that at that time (1859) regular grammatical study had been used in schools for only fifty or sixty years.

Dryden seems to be the first great English writer who does not share Sir Philip Sidney's opinion. In fact,

Dryden sometimes found it necessary to translate an English sentence into Latin to be sure that its grammatical construction was correct..

According to the facts presented by . Dykema, the origin of prescriptive grammar is found in social emulation. For many years society was static. When a man had accumulated enough money to advance in society, he needed English teachers, lest his speech betray him. These teachers wrote many books about grammar and usage until the idea became established that good English could be reduced to rules. Even the early American school (19th century) based its teaching on the works of 18th century grammarians, and gradually, faith in grammar became established.

Dykema believes that language changes occur naturally, and that there should be no arbitrary reform. Rather, good language should be acquired by attentive listening and earnest imitating.

School and Society
Vol. 57, Feb. 20, 1943, pp. 216-217

"Grammar for Whom?"
by George R. Johnson--Director of Elementary Education, St. Louis Public Schools

That the study of formal grammar is not practical for the average man is Johnson's emphatic position. He states that grammar, except for the functional type, should be reserved for colleges and even there only for profession-

al students of language. Even the title "functional grammar" has been introduced to satisfy both grammarians and the teachers who emphasize correct usage. Functional grammar is usually a rationalizing of correct usage. The bright child observes good usage without its being taught, but a conscious effort to call attention to grammatical forms as they appear functionally "serves to lay a surer foundation for a systematic study of formal grammar at a later period for those who wish to pursue it...Grammar is not a road to better speech."

The author suggests that a knowledge of habit-building be applied to speech because he feels that developing good speech habits is the basis of correct usage. To break down old habits he gives three aids: 1. "not grammatical principles or rules, but exact forms of speech which are correct for use in specific situations,. 2. an actuating desire to acquire the correct form, 3. the technique to be followed in conscious repetitions."

Elementary English Review
Vol. 19, November 1942, pp.257-258

"The War, Grammar, and Hocus-Pocus"
by Helen Rand Miller, Evanston Township High School, Evanston, Illinois

That the teaching of communication is more important than the teaching of grammar is Miss Miller's thesis. She states that grammar in itself is not important but the communication of ideas to others is what should be emphasized. For this end, pupils must be taught to read, write, and talk about subjects that they need to use now.

She would not do away with all grammar, but expresses the wish that the war will do away with the teaching of grammatical terms in the 8th grade because they need them in the 9th, or sweep them from the 9th because they need them in the 10th. What is taught will be taught for immediate use and complete mastery will be the basis for future growth. Again and again the author reiterates that it is communication that should be emphasized--talking, writing, listening, reading.

Elementary English Review
Vol. 20, March 1943, pp. 103-7

"How Much Language Form Shall We Teach?"
by Sophia C. Camenisch, Chicago Teachers College

This article shows that despite opposition, the spearhead of common sense is invading the territory of formal grammar. As yet the author does not advocate the

elimination of grammar, because she feels that the really necessary principles are so few that they could be spread out and taught thoroughly without taking an undue amount of time. She does suggest correcting vulgarisms, slang, and other forms of incorrect usage. For this, the pupil needs very little technical grammar, but the teacher should know it so that she will know when to place correct emphasis.

Journal of Educational Research
Vol. XXXV, No. 2, October 1941, pp. 109-118

"A Study of Certain Factors Affecting English Usage".
by Leland P. Bradford, University of Illinois

According to the editor's note this study is an attempt to "objectify and collect data with reference to certain of these factors." Carefully and conservatively the author states that many factors influence the type and correctness of English usage of the individual. The general assumption is that the teaching of formal grammar is one of the most important influences upon English usage. Otherwise there would be little justification for the amount of time that has been given to the learning of grammar. The relative importance of various factors in correct language usage are then shown. The eight that are mentioned are: 1.Extent of formal education, 2. Age, 3. Previous major oc-

cupation, 4. Years spent in former occupation, 5. Race, 6. Size of community, 7. Father's occupation, 8. Foreign or native birth of the parents. Data used for this study was obtained from 854 adults employed by the W.P.A. in Illinois as teachers on the Adult Education Program. Further details may be found in table 1, p. 111.

In the summary the author states that many factors affect the English usage of individuals by showing that any one factor taken by itself has relatively little effect upon the language usage of adults. Without doubt, the idea that grammar alone will bring good results must be discarded. Further investigation should be initiated and the results used in the schools if the teaching of English is to be improved.

Encyclopedia of Educational Research
Prepared Under Auspices of American
Educational Research Association
Walter S. Munroe, Editor 1941
"Grammar As Method" pp.456-457; 446-459

From tests given in grammar, composition, and literary interpretation it is shown that there is very little relationship between grammar and composition, and grammar and literary interpretation. The reason seemed to be that grammar did not transfer to writing or recognizing correct English. Aside from that there was, apparently, no disciplinary value in the teaching of grammar.

In 1936 the Curriculum Committee of the National Council recommended no separate teaching of grammar and sentence structure. Grammar, they felt, was still a good "editorial tool", and in a critical and scientific study of language it could be used to good advantage.. That the disciplinary value of grammar was negligible, that it was not so necessary to foreign languages as formerly thought,. and that it made no contribution to reading skills were further conclusions drawn by the committee. In addition,. they felt that grammar is difficult, if not impossible to teach to the point of practical application, and that the only valid grammar is that which is based upon accepted usage..

The English Journal
Vol. 24, No.. 1, May 1935,. pp.. 403-410

"A Four-Year Study of Freshman English"
by J.D. Clark

The freshmen at North Carolina State College (1930-1933) were subjected during the fall term to an experiment in the teaching of grammar. The first freshmen who were poor in English had more drill in grammar given to them. Later the formal grammar text was eliminated and the emphasis was put on "selected readings as integrated units of technique and thought." Stress was placed on

thought processes and "formal structure as associated definitely with the context." Progress tests administered in 1932 showed "superior standing 53.75 gain against 50.68 and 42.63 the old way." When the same method was used at a later date but with a text that was more interesting to the students, a gain of 79.20 was recorded. From these facts it was concluded that formalized teaching of grammar was less successful with the majority of the students than the method mentioned above had been.

The English Journal (High School edition)
Vol. 22, No. 9, Nov. 1933, pp. 742-750

"Problems of Sentence Structures in Pupils' Themes"
by Ellen Frogner

This investigation was initiated because the development of sentence structure in composition writing is still of prime importance in junior and senior high schools. Each child wrote three compositions (narrative, social news, and exposition) which resulted in a total of 2,821 compositions by 959 pupils in grades 7, 9, 11, from three junior high schools, and three senior high schools in Minneapolis. These were divided according to the I.Q.'s of the pupils.

While there was a decrease in the use of simple sentences, there was no evidence to show a definite relationship between intelligence and the use of dependent clauses in sentences. Rather, the use of the clause

seemed to depend more on maturity. Another conclusion was that some approach other than that of grammatical analysis be used to attack the problems of clear thinking and correct expression.

The Journal of Educational Psychology
Vol. 22, No. 2, Feb. 1931, pp. 81-96

"Practice Versus Grammar in the Learning of Correct English Usage"
by Percival M. Symonds

"Recent correlation studies have shown little relationship between knowledge of English grammar on the one hand, and the correctness of usage on the other." As a result of experimentation, it was found that there were very small gains when repetition of correct forms was used as the only method. While learning grammatical rules does help reach the goal of good usage, practice in the choice of expressions was found to be better. When the correct and incorrect forms were presented in succession and thoroughly understood, the result was better on usage than just straight work on grammar. However, the results of combining all three methods were greater than those achieved by any one of them alone.

The author feels that while grammar does have some influence on usage, the time spent in grammatical analysis is all out of proportion to the good that it accomplishes. Other simpler and more direct ways leave time for more worthwhile studies in the curriculum.

Journal of Educational Research
Vol. 14, Dec. 1926, pp. 401-402

"Relation of Achievement in Formal Grammar to Achievement in Applied Grammar"
by David Segel and Nora R. Barr

Over one thousand sophomores and juniors in the Long Beach Senior High School were given tests in formal and applied grammar. Scores in formal grammar were lower, while those in applied grammar were higher. The authors' suggestions from these results are that it would seem as if formal grammar were forgotten, but that work in usage improved. The conclusion was that there is no immediate transfer in the application of formal grammar to applied English grammar.

School and Society
Vol. 17, Jan. 27, 1923, pp. 109-111

"Does Knowledge of Formal Grammar Function?"
by William Asker

Asker cites the situation in which high school teachers complain that their pupils' work in English is poor because grammar has not been sufficiently stressed in the grades. In this article he shows that tests were given to show the relationship between grammatical knowledge and the ability to judge correctness of sentence structure. The results showed only a small correlation, a Pearson coefficient of 0.23. Because the facts show that formal grammar influences composition only to a slight degree, the

author concludes that it is a waste of time for most children to spend time on formal grammar in the elementary schools.

The Grammar of English Grammars
1859, pp. 93-108, Chapter 8

"Grammatical Study of the English Language"
by Goold Brown

This book is introduced to show the original source of the statement made by Karl Dykema in an article earlier discussed in this thesis.

Brown ardently defends grammar, but notes that "The regular grammatical study of our language is a thing of recent origin. Fifty or sixty years ago, such an exercise was scarcely attempted in any of the schools either in this country or in England." Although he finds grammar indispensable, the author adds the interesting comment that the only question is whether the student will learn through observing the speech and writings of others. In some respects this seems to be the modern dilemma, too.

Essays on Morality
1834, p.195
by Jonathan Dymond

Goold Brown's contemporary, Jonathan Dymond, differed radically with him where the subject of grammar was concerned. The latter would dispense with formal grammar because he felt that a boy gained more by talking

with educated people than by poring over books. If a child hears good English well-spoken, and reads good books he acquires good English naturally. On the other hand, if he is not so fortunate, Dymond believes that books will never teach him these essentials. He concludes that men learn by habit rather than from rules, a statement that is made with increasing frequency by some modern writers.

The English Language
1912 Chap. 3 "Modern English", pp. 62-81
by Logan Pearsall Smith

Literary history of the sixteenth century throws an interesting light on the modern problem of English grammar. In speaking of the language during the middle of the century, Smith notes the attempt of patriotic "purists" to purge the language of foreign elements. Other groups worked to eradicate words of foreign derivation. The author comments significantly, "The result was a language of unsurpassed richness and beauty, which, however, defies all rules. To the Elizabethan it seemed as if almost any word could be used in any grammatical relation..." No language, he concludes remains static, but constantly undergoes the process of transformation.

Such historical facts as these form part of Dykema's argument in his article "Do We Need to Teach Grammar?", published in The School Review Vol. LII, No. 8, Oct.

1944.

Elementary English Review
Vol. 16, March 1939, pp. 86-90

"Grammar Reconsidered"
by Alexander Brede

Brede's article refutes Wilson Follett's ideas of grammar. The author states that language changes slowly and will not be confined by rules, customs, or tradition. The question is not to decide whether grammatical rules have been satisfied, but rather, whether the idea has been communicated clearly. The framework should be adjusted to the language, and not vice versa. Because a person understands the rules of grammar, does not mean that he has learned to use the language effectively; in fact, mere academic knowledge is more confusing than helpful to the average person, the author asserts.

The English of the individual, whether oral or written is a result of his environment because, in general, we speak as our families and associates speak. We have been teaching grammar since 1900, but as yet there is no improved general average of speech. School training has little effect on language outside of school unless there is an unusual interest. Brede would recommend the reading of good literature followed by discussion and the investigation of words in preference to the teaching of formal grammar. Apparently, he would agree with Clark whose experiment at

North Carolina State College followed similar ideas.

Elementary English Review
Vol. 16, March 1939, pp. 91-92

"An Evaluation of Two Methods of Teaching Written Sentence Structure"
by John P. Milligan

Milligan does not question the value of grammar, but rather the method of presentation. He experimented with ten classes in grades four, five, and six with two methods of teaching functional grammar: the precise, and the incidental methods. In the former he set up exercises in logical order which concerned various phases of grammar that would be useful in developing good sentences. In the incidental method the teaching of grammar was based from day to day on the errors that arose in written composition.

The results showed that the incidental method was a little more effective than the other. The general implication was that grammar taught in conjunction with the child's writing experiences was more worthwhile than isolated, formal drill.

Elementary English Review
Vol. 16, March 1939, pp. 97-100

"Needed Research in Language, Composition, and Grammar"
by James W. Evans

There is great need of research in the general field of English because the average research studies have not been of much use to the classroom teacher. What is

needed is not error studies, but positive data of pupils' needs. One reason why there has been so little research of the type suggested, is that the question of grade placement in language is difficult.

In regard to informal grammar, research has presented something of a negative endorsement; that is, it has failed to establish the claims of the formalists. Many curricular changes have been made in recent years on the basis of that which research has failed to prove. Concluding with such significant statements, Evans then states the need for a program of investigation which will help determine what happens to pupils of each particular level of ability.

An Experience Curriculum in English
(A Report of the Curriculum Commission of the N.C.T.E.), pp. 228-238
W. Wilbur Hatfield, Chairman 1935

"Instrumental Grammar"

Here is an acceptance of the fact that scientific investigation has failed to show that the study of grammar has been effective in correcting usage errors. Aside from this, however, is the thought that sentence elements must eventually be manipulated so pupils should early become acquainted with the names of these elements. There would be no concentrated drilling and testing, but at an early age (second grade) a name such as adverb might

be introduced casually when it occurs in a sentence. Constant reference to the term by the teacher would help it to become familiar and, eventually, part of the child's vocabulary. Whatever the value of such a procedure, it is because of the introductory remark that this report has been introduced.

Facts about Current English Usage Including a Discussion of Current Usage in Grammar from Current English Usage, by Sterling A. Leonard, English Monograph No. 7 pp.132-138
by Albert Marckwardt and Fred G. Walcott

Although the authors do not know how much formal grammar helps speech habits, they feel that there is still a place for the study of grammatical principles which "govern the logic of thought" and also its communication. However, they do believe that grammar has been too analytical and that there has been too much pulling apart of sentences. The method of attack has been wrong. The instructor should start with the whole sentence, and then break it up into large elements. Grammar should not be "final and static", but rather, an assembling of the rules and practices that represent speech habits of educated people.

Because the authors included no iron-clad endorsement of formal grammar, and because of their outlook on "static grammar", this article seemed worthwhile including.

Journal of Education
Vol. 124, April 1941, p. 121

"A Drive on Faulty English"
by Salibelle Royster

Royster's article demonstrates the actual operation of "device teaching " which Kaulfers upholds in an earlier review in this thesis. Members of the English department prepared a short list of common English errors. Copies of the error and the correct form were posted in every room, and attention was frequently called to the error, and teachers marked down any work in which the error appeared. In this way the school helped pupils from uncultured homes to develop correct speech and to take pride in doing so.

English Journal (High School Edition)
Vol. XXVII January 1938, No. 1 pp. 643-649

"English Grammar Again"
by Dora V. Smith.

Here is a presentation of data on a number of studies in connection with the study of grammar which would seem to show that the usage approach to the study of English expression is more effective than the grammatical approach. In support of her evident conclusion, she cites the following proof.

Professor Boraas of St. Olaf College found highest correlation between ability in mathematics and grammar;

whereas, the lowest was with results in composition. A New York survey found a similarly low correlation between the ability to pass a test on usage and the ability to communicate clearly ideas in writing. Miss Catherwood, who worked with children in three Minnesota towns, found that 93% of the seventh-grade pupils could correct a given grammatical error, but that only 8% could give the reason for the correction. The implication seemed to her to be that there was something else besides grammatical knowledge which brought about a correct response from so many pupils. Similar situations arose at the University of Iowa, University High School in Minneapolis, North Carolina State College, and at the University of Illinois. All of these instances, according to the author showed that emphasis on grammar was ineffective.

One more observation by the author warrants attention and that is that style may also be taught without a knowledge of grammar. This is to be done by emphasizing "clarity of thought" and "effectiveness of expression alone."

<u>Evaluating Instruction in Secondary School English</u>
English Monograph No. 11 pp. 102-121
by Dora V. Smith

Chapter VI "Curriculum Problems and Courses of Study Analysis in English"
"The Problem of Grammar" pp. 112-113
"Speech and Oral English" pp.113-114

The opinion that poor students need more grammar

is widely held. The author, however, believes that this actually lessens the chance to hear or to speak good English. While this is a hindrance even to the good students, it is decidedly more so for those of lower mentality. Research shows that this group is less able to comprehend generalizations of any kind. Research also shows that grammar does not bear such a great relationship to improvement of speech and writing as was formerly thought.

Allocating sufficient time to oral English is another important problem. The New York speech teachers have little time for this type of work because they must teach voice technique and phonetics. On the other hand, the English teacher may feel that it is not her job or that, perhaps, it was not too important because it was not tested in annual examinations. Smith's statements would imply that inadequate time was given to a subject of tremendous potentiality.

Conclusions on Previous Investigation

While many different opinions are presented in the foregoing articles, there seems to be general agreement concerning the fact that analytical grammar has not proved its right to the prominent position in the school curriculum it has held in the past. Remedial suggestions are numerous and modern trends show an interesting determination to act.

One author would eliminate all grammar except the functional type in the secondary schools, while another would introduce grammatical terms to second graders in a casual manner. Methods of teaching range from informal presentation of material to thorough drill on necessary grammatical elements. The question of what should be taught and what should not be taught, also, has raised much discussion.

Apparently outranking most of the other problems is the question, "What is functional grammar?" Practically all of the theories suggested in the summaries might be given this classification and, certainly, a great variety of opinions is listed there. However, there is one thought that most of these writers hold in common besides the desire for improvement: that is, the imperative need for good English usage. Truly, it has been given superlative recognition. Whether it be developed through

listening, talking, reading, or writing, seemingly, the first step toward better English would be to raise the standard of English usage until it becomes the common standard.

These summaries probably constitute a small section of prevailing opinion but it has been difficult to find much material on this subject. The most prolific source has been current magazines of an educational nature. However, the fact that grammar is involved in such thoughtful discussion augurs well for the future.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

There are many phases of functional grammar which would be worthwhile investigating and the need for such scientific research in the field of English is great.

An important step would be made if it could be decided what types of sentences should be used in a workbook such as this, for instance. Then there is the problem of what shall be taught in functional grammar. What constructions are indispensable? What terms are essential to an intelligent discussion of English? What work should be allotted to each grade? What vocabulary should be used in each grade?

These are but a few suggestions in a very broad field. However, any of them have interesting possibilities, and all of them would be helpful in making functional grammar effective.

CHAPTER II

THE WORKBOOK

Introduction To
The Exercises

Introduction to the Exercises

These exercises have been written for high school seniors because it seemed as though English might be fun for many if there were not so many grammatical barriers. It could be interesting and worthwhile for a still larger number if these pupils could make immediate contact with words and sentences without the preliminary of grammar. It is true that there is no royal road to learning, but could it be that there are more efficient ways of teaching English, more interesting ways, ways that could effectively side-step embattled grammar? It is the purpose of this thesis to attempt to discover some of these ways in order that pupils may find something in English besides another class.

The workbook which follows has three main divisions: Misinterpretations, Well-Chosen Words, and Sentences. The last classification (Sentences) has four subdivisions: Sentence Sense, Complex Sentences, Compound Sentences, Compound-Complex Sentences. These sections, composed of original exercises, are purposely given this sequence to forward the general plan of the whole workbook. This plan has been to attract the pupils' attention through humor, to show an active vocabulary in everyday use, to simplify the acquisition of "sentence sense", to teach the need and easy use of

variety in sentence structure.

The pupil becomes acquainted with each part through an introduction which is followed by appropriate exercises. Following is a short explanation of each division.

MISINTERPRETATIONS:

Misinterpretation arising from misplacement or misuse of words seemed to offer a happy opportunity for introducing the lighter side of English to pupils who might be wary of the traditional type workbook. These exercises are used primarily to catch the student off guard in the hope that after the first chuckle, he might want to read further. Then there is the secondary but more conventional purpose: that of calling attention to laughable errors in order that they may be avoided. The errors that were chosen were selected from various grammars, because they could be used to produce ridiculous effects. Woolley's book[1] was particularly helpful.

WELL-CHOSEN WORDS:

Here again the soliciting of interest was felt to be of first importance in constructing the exercises. In close competition for order was the thought that vocabulary teaching becomes effective more quickly when it is closely associated with immediate circumstances.

E. C. Woolley, A New Handbook of Composition, (Boston, Massachusetts: D. C. Heath and Company, 1920), op. 255.

Since many of us are interested in such people as our neighbors, the grocer, the hairdresser, the class athlete, it seemed well at first to tie vocabulary to these personalities. Making word pictures of acquaintances is fun if the words can be chosen easily and accurately. Perhaps such exercises as these may pique the pupils' curiosity enough to set them investigating words. For those who would not be interested in doing this, there is the consolation of knowing that they have, at least, acquired a number of new words which could be immediately useful.

SENTENCES:

Developing "sentence sense" is so much an oral problem that it becomes somewhat labored when reduced to paper and type. Practically everyone in a normal situation talks in correct sentences even if his selection of words is wrong; however, the situation seems fraught with difficulties once these same sentences are placed on paper. In this thesis the intention is to give intensive oral work on this phase of English--interesting, pertinent drill. Grammatical analysis would merely destroy the whole idea that is being presented. If children in the primary grades have the ability to learn to speak and write in correct sentences without the help of grammar, it seems as though more mature children could learn more

easily.

The criteria that are set up for sentences are very simple because they were first used successfully to develop the sentence idea in the intermediate grades. They may not be adequate from a grammatical standpoint, but they have helped to solve this problem for many a puzzled youngster. There are many possible variations of these questions that have been asked in developing sentence sense.

If this oral work is coupled with constant checking of written work, more satisfactory results may be obtained. Neglect of this phase, however, may develop carelessness and poor sentences may become merely a bad habit.

There is no final authority to judge what types of sentences should be taught and so it seemed feasible to teach the old familiar kinds that have appeared in many of our textbooks: complex, compound, compound-complex. (The simple sentence is taken care of under the section called "Sentence Sense.") This was not a routine matter, however, because in each type there was a decidedly worthwhile value to be gained. Among other things relation of ideas and difference in effect were sought in designing these exercises.

For this section no attempt was made to have a

humorous approach. All English does not portray humor and so the unit seemed to be better balanced by the introduction of sentences of a more serious nature. These include a variety of experiences and have been made into as colorful and attractive a section as possible.

CONCLUSIONS:

These pages show a small number of the many ways that exercises in functional grammar might be arranged to meet the needs and the interests of high school pupils.

Exercises

on

Misinterpretations

[redacted]

by

[redacted]

PUPILS' INTRODUCTION
Do You Always Say What You Mean?

It is so easy to think that you have, and then discover that what appeared serious to you has caused a riot of laughter for others. The English language is so full of opportunities for misinterpretations. A comma omitted, a word misplaced, and a dozen other things can lend a meaning to your composition that you never intended.

That's why we're starting with misinterpretations. This following group is not meant to be hilarious, merely mildly amusing, enough to introduce to you a lighter side of English that, perhaps, has been unknown or unemphasized. Seeing the ludicrous mistakes that others make, may help you to detect similar ridiculous effects in your own work.

You'll get most fun out of these if you talk them over in class--and incidentally, most benefit. Read the sentences and try to find out what the writer meant; then see what he actually wrote. Finally, decide what error or errors he has made and how you would correct them.

1.
Is That So!
(Repetition of the Preposition)

Examples:

1. The card shark enjoyed beating city slickers with tricks,,with games, and pompous businessmen. (What a beating!)

   If the word <u>with</u> had been repeated in front of <u>pompous businessmen</u>, the error would have been apparent and could have been corrected.

2. The king was universally detested by all who hate tyrants, and especially women and children. (Who hated whom?)

   Better: The king was universally detested by all who hate tyrants, and especially, <u>by</u> women and children.

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1. The judge pronounced heavy sentence on those who had swallowed the evidence and, particularly, dishonest politicians.
2. The zoo was full of lions and tigers who liked to tear at great pieces of raw meat and many monkeys, too.
3. The whole town was grateful to the firemen who saved the great old barn, licked by the flames and many summer visitors.
4. The butcher was besieged by customers who liked meat, especially housewives.

5. To show the old man how to manage the shop and keep up with the latest dance steps seemed to take all of the young fellow's time.
6. Her home was overrun by collectors who gloated over antiques and inexperienced buyers.
7. By instructing the men who were working and playing the saxophone, Ted managed to pay all current bills.
8. Her home is the mecca of young lawyers who hold every cent tightly, and young ladies of impeccable character.
9. By teaching his young son the art of fishing and gambling with his friends, the bank clerk satisfied both his domestic yearnings and his social obligations.
10. To help the bear learn his routine and keep up with the other village swains was a difficult task.

2.
What Do You Mean?
(Uncertain Reference)

Example: Whose leg?

The frightened pony looked angrily at the cowboy as he threw his leg high into the air.

---

1. When Mr. Shier caught the rabbit for his young son, he cut him up and made a delicious stew.
2. Seeing the red fox dash across the road, Bill put a bullet through his heart.

3. The hungry fishermen found many worms for the fish which they ate greedily. (Rationing can do anything now-a-days!)
4. The brooding hen cackled furiously when the boys tried to move her eggs and sat firmly on all of them for the rest of the morning.
5. When the fire broke out in his wardrobe, Mr. Smith grabbed his wife, then his smouldering clothes, and dumped them into the bathtub.
6. Bashful Tom talked softly to his old horse who was going to take Miss Mira home and he tied on her ancient feedbag with friendly concern.
7. The popular crooner brought his dog along and then he howled throughout the performance.
8. The dog barked furiously when little Wilfred pinched his tail.
9. When the baby upset the ink on the tablecloth, Mrs. Smith plunged it immediately into boiling water.
10. With his wife standing near his favorite mare, he scratched her ears and gave her a handful of oats.

3.
What's That!
(Position of Modifiers)

Examples:

a. The great hounds bayed as the ladies talked nervously

with deep bass voices. (Is it laryngitis?)

b. When the hangman approached the gallows laughing and shouting were heard from the narrow court. (Merry old chap, isn't he?)

1. The cat wailed just as we reached the house with ungodly glee.
2. Don concluded the eccentric dance while his proud mother watched with wild leaping and shrieking.
3. The great whip made an ugly sound as the boys approached the house whistling in the air.
4. The little soprano sang as the bridge club listened with unusual sweetness.
5. Fanny was last seen when the bus pulled out wearing a pink and white striped dress.
6. When they appeared walking slowly down the avenue was an ugly mongrel.
7. A child played as the poisonous reptile slithered toward it happily.
8. She walked morosely along the rocky beach as the sun sank into the ocean with many a stifled sigh.
9. As he ran home sniffling and sobbing were heard in the distance.
10. As he pored over his books roaring and screaming were heard in the distance.

4.

You Wouldn't Believe It!
(Dangling Participles)

Example: Screaming murderously, the policeman struggled with the maniac. (Who made the more noise?)

1. Snorting vigorously, Tom tried to get the bull back into the pen.
2. Shouting with delight, Mrs. Weber took the children on a long-promised picnic.
3. Skipping daintily along the woodland paths, her uncle showed Sally the wonders of the great forest.
4. Flapping her wings angrily, the teacher struggled to help the captive bird.
5. Rearing and bucking, the stout old gentleman had little pleasure with his new mare.
6. Equipped with a long knife, the gentle old lady watched him enter the mysterious mansion.
7. After scrubbing her neck vigorously, the mother put her young daughter to bed.
8. On seeing his new home at the zoo, the old man bade a reluctant farewell to the little black monkey.
9. While cackling furiously, the young fellow caught the angry old hen.
10. After winning the football game, the old lady forgave her recalcitrant nephew.

5.
A Sad Case!
(Mixed Figures of Speech)

Example: When he reached the end of his rope, he decided that he must sink or swim.

1. His fortunes were washed overboard in the depression, but he planted another crop.
2. It isn't always the early bird who catches the wolf in sheep's clothing.
3. Momentarily his troubles were sidetracked, but soon they were sown again.
4. The future seemed unclouded but, unfortunately, he made mountains out of molehills.
5. Life seemed a mountain of doubts, but he soared around every whirlpool.
6. He hitched his wagon to a star, but there was no gold at the end of the rainbow.
7. Although she was as persistently vocal as a jay, no one had ever nipped her conversation in the bud.
8. A bird in the hand is worth half a dozen far-away cows wearing long horns.
9. Let sleeping dogs lie in their own juice.
10. He is just another rolling stone sailing aimlessly through life.

6.
You Can Never Tell!
(Incorrect Parallelism)

Example: She was a sweet old lady, who enjoyed a good joke and despised a parasite, who preyed on the charity of kind-hearted neighbors.

1. Houson was a rough old sailor who scorned the landlubber, who curled his hair, and wore fancy ties.
2. He was a frightened little monkey, that crawled far out on a limb, that was huge and unbending.
3. The hostess was a cold austere woman, who had never cared for her daughter, who loved to play jump-rope and dolls.
4. The pale young widow, who mourned her husband, who shot up the town, drove slowly home.
5. The colt was a poor little weakling that could never be like its mother, that kicked up her heels merrily, and ran about the pasture.
6. Henry whipped the cowardly young bully who picked on Elise, who was so sweet and gentle.
7. The gentle little puppy, whose mother was a terrier, whose temper was vicious, cuddled against the warm pillow.
8. We heard about the pious old man who was struck by the driver, who was ghastly drunk.
9. Peter was unusually tall, good-looking, and had several

gold teeth.

10. The glamorous elf was slim, willowy, and she loved salted peanuts.

7.
Do You Really Mean It?
(Homonyms)

Example: With their own pens some people seemingly admit their preference for a hole in the ground. Of course, they don't know that they do. What they really mean is that they live in a section called a borough!

burrow--borough

1. Grunting and snorting, the five o'clock local jerked to a stop at the sleepy little borough.
2. The angry woodchuck returned to his cozy burrow.

I. gamble--gambol

An ailing wife complained in a letter to a sympathetic maiden lady that her husband seldom came home from work because he gamboled half the night. Such capers on the part of a dignified gentleman were truly astounding to the friend until she realized that the wife had been grieving over her husband's financial affairs rather than his acrobatic activities. How would you use these words?

1. Traditionally speaking, the little lamb_____ on the green.
2. Merry children rode the crest of the wave, _____

like elves in the green sea.

3. Meredith's wife needed no further information concerning his _____ other than that which his empty pockets gave her.

baron---barren

II. The tale of the robber <u>barren</u> rather eclipses itself since even a robber baron could never be intriguing with a barren personality. See what you can do to amend the situation.

1. The doughty_____surveyed the _____fields surrounding the dismal castle.
2. "'Twas I laid waste these _____valleys", boasted the shameless _____.

mantel---mantle

III. With simple grace King Richard threw his richly-embroidered <u>mantel</u> about his knightly shoulders. Imagine! We are expected to admire Richard's graceful simplicity, but I find it difficult not to marvel at his superhuman strength that enables him to toss mantels lightly over his shoulders and his truly phenomenal poise that permits a mantel to dangle from his neck while he exhibits no more self-consciousness than if it were a silk scarf! If you were the author, what would you have Richard do with his mantel?

1. The stalwart king placed the treasure on the great _____that stretched widely above the ancient fireplace.
2. Two gallant knights placed the jewel-encrusted _____over the noble shoulders of the king.

rest--wrest

IV. The father angrily rested his daughter's hand from her admirer's adoring grip. What a truly Herculean young man! If the lady's arm had to be rested after such a brief encounter, it is well that her father appeared; otherwise, we might expect a broken arm or mangled fingers! How would you do your resting?

1. Priscilla _____her silky curls from her small brother's clutching hands.
2. Battle-worn and weary, the young lieutenant felt that he could _____for countless aeons.

roomer---rumor

V. Capt. Mandl left for home in great haste because his wife had written about a particularly obnoxious roomer. Did he toss him ignominiously into the street, or was there a slight error in Mrs. Mandl's letter?

1. The stout, impecunious _____hastily shoved himself under the bed whenever the landlady knocked peremptorily at his door.

2. When Dan heard the galling _____ that someone else was taking Elise to the ball, he made deliberate preparations for battle.

fishers---fissures

VI. The great slab of weathered rock was full of widening fishers that stretched for miles along the Massachusetts coast. What men of Mars! If they are not from Mars, must we attribute their widening girth and tremendous length to the excellence of Massachusetts fish? What kind of fishers would <u>you</u> have?

1. With many a gay song and lusty shout the _____ swarmed down the gangplank to the palm-hidden island.
2. After the quake had subsided, long narrow _____ were found in the open fields.

Exercises

on

Well-Chosen Words

PUPILS' INTRODUCTION
You and Your Vocabulary

No, a vocabulary won't carry the ball for you, but it may get you the chance to carry it. If you have ideas, the coach may listen to you. If you can explain these ideas clearly and accurately, if you can make them sound to him the way you picture them in your mind, you'll get a chance to try them out. There's the difficulty! Can you? If your sentences are a jumble of words that present only vaguely what you mean, the answer is, "No." If the words you say and the way you say them mean exactly what you want them to mean, the coach gets a vivid picture of the play and your chances for a try-out are favorable.

Maybe it isn't football. Maybe it's glamour that you want. Perhaps you aren't good-looking. Perhaps you're too tall, too fat, too short. Try working on your personality, then. Did you ever think of personality in words? It's like this. Do you have the right word for the right occasion, or are you always "putting your foot in it?" Are your words always being misinterpreted by others? Are you limited to "grand" and "nice"? If you are, you're no different from too many others. Be different! Not conspicuously so, but at least enough to show your friends whether you're complimenting them or insulting them. Let them know whether you are conveying sympathy or admiration. Don't make them guess. Your friends

will begin to know the real you, the you that has been smothered under "grand" and "nice". It's worth trying!

Or maybe you're older. Perhaps you are working and you have good ideas the same as the lad who wanted to carry the ball. But you can't interest anyone in your ideas. You never can say exactly what you want to say and what you do succeed in murmuring to your employer sounds dull and impracticable. The answer is the same again. Learn the right words and learn the way to put them together. Perhaps you never did have the chance to have the education that you wanted, but you can get the essentials now. The army proved that.

So This Is Your Neighbor!

Maybe you like him; maybe you don't. At any rate, words are your most potent tool should you care to make your sentiments known! The groups of sentences below will show you how to make accurate application of your vocabulary.

1. Mrs. Dean was an attractive matron of about fifty with lines of gray in her hair. Write the comment that the following people would make about her:

   a. Her best friend

      (Mrs. Dean is a handsome woman a little over forty, with a touch of gray in her hair.)

   b. A casual observer

      (She seems to be a pleasant-mannered, middle-aged woman with graying hair.)

   c. Her worst enemy

      (The inconsequential, gray-haired old harridan!)

2. Peter, the family pet, was a fair-haired lad of about seven, who combined a too-ready fund of street knowledge with a fairly amiable disposition.

   a. As his eighteen-year old sister sees him:

      (Whenever I have company, he is the most detestable little wretch that I know!)

b. A neighbor complains:

(He is the most insolent brat in the neighborhood.)

c. His mother views him:

(He's so nervous, the poor, misunderstood little fellow.--- or---- The adorable child is so independent, so high-spirited!)

3. The tall willowy Mrs. Van Dee, who had just moved into the neighborhood, had caused much comment with her blonde beauty and pleasant but uncommunicative manner.

a. The club gossip:

(I have heard it intimated that this exotic blonde with her unfathomable eyes might be a FOREIGN AGENT!)

b. The gossip's collegiate son who aspires toward the poetical:

(Mother! Never will I listen to the name of such an enchanting creature being bruited about.)

c. The beautician's story:

(I feel certain that the poor girl is the victim of some great sorrow.)

4. Our very fine old neighbor had a sulphurous vocabulary that unconsciously included everybody and everything

a. Miss Prissy Jones:

(He is positively uncouth and obnoxious!)

b. A friendly neighbor:

(He is a fine old fellow, but he certainly girdles the world with his unconscious blasphemy.)

c. High school girl:

(I like him, but he embarrasses me because he swears like a sea-going parrot when he's just saying, "Hello".)

5. We all knew Miss Lee, stalking solemnly inside her ancient coat and gazing sternly at the world as it crossed her eccentric path.

a. The person who kept house for her:

(Wait until <u>you</u> have to live with a miserly, dyspeptic old crone!)

b. The grocer:

(She watches the scales like a hawk, counts her money like a bank detective, and then looks at me as though I were mud.)

c. Charitable neighbor:

(She's such a forlorn old soul, unloving and unloved.)

6. At fifty-three, he bounced along like a dating collegian.

a. Curtain-peeking neighbor:

(The gay Lothario! At his age, too!)

b. His stenographer:

(He really has that inexplicable something--but not as much as he thinks he has.)

c. His wife:

(He can go just so far, and then I'll amputate his initiative again!)

2.

Now You Try It!

You have just read a few pen sketches of your neighbor. Now you try it. Under each picture are a list of words and phrases that may help you to express your thoughts. These are only suggestions. Do not hesitate to use others if you want. Comment briefly on the various characters suggested below.

1. Mr. Smith, the huge genial grocer, was not averse to retailing a choice bit of gossip along with his merchandise.

a. Dear old Mrs. Brown's opinion:
(kind, humorous, generosity, jocularity)

b. Tart-tongued Josephine:
(odious, newsmonger, penurious, malevolent)

c. A newcomer to the neighborhood
(tremendous girth, astonished, omniscient, popularity)

2. The gay old widow had young ideas and plenty of money, and Mr. Petrie like all three.

a. Light-hearted Sally:
("the face that launched a thousand ships", rapturous, ecstacy, entrancing)

b. An unsuccessful rival:
(dominating, persistent, leech, simpleton, simpering)

c. Judge Morton's ideas on the subject
(unwise, disturbed, precarious, dubious)

3. Day after day the school bus was filled to overflowing with noisy exuberant youth.

a. Sympathetic persons:
(merriment, hilarity, light-hearted, vivacious)

b. The perturbed matron who has just had her hat knocked off:
(boisterous, rude, undisciplined, clamorous, ungentlemanly)

c. The sad-eyed old gentleman:
(hopeless, unruly, younger generation, despair)

4. Careena's eagerly-denied youth was a constant annoyance to this young sophisticate who aped the complete boredom of the worldly-wise.

a. Her schoolmates:
(conceited, impossible, supercilious, ill-tempered)

b. Her admirers:
(paragon, ideal, unparalleled, mental breadth, mature)

c. Grown-ups:
(childish, ridiculous, absurd, nauseating, mimicking)

5. For countless years Gramp Edwards, high school janitor, had cleaned the building thoroughly and advised the younger generation philosophically.

a. High school students
(sympathetic, terse, good-hearted, understanding)

b. Aspirant to his job
(octogenarian, slovenly, negligent, careless, heedless)

c. High school principal
(industrious, discreet, meticulous, cheerful)

3.
Don't Be Common!

Don't have a three-word vocabulary: AWFUL! SWELL! WONDERFUL! Do you talk the same when you're thrilled as when you're disgusted or unhappy? A few well-chosen words say volumes more than just an emotional GEE! GOLLY! GOSH! Read the page that follows and you'll get the idea.

1. A tall girl

a. Admiration:

What a willowy sylph!

b. Amazement:

I feel completely Lilliputian!

c. Ridicule:

There goes the Empire State on stilts!

2. Large hands

a. Fear:

Those huge cruel hands have all the evil strength

of the strangler.

b. Disgust:

His great fat paws are revolting.

c. Sarcastically:

Imagine anyone's caressing a great ham like that!

3. A well-formed ball-player

a. Deliriously:

The heavens open, crowds gape in awe, and all nature sings when young Apollo walks.

b. Enviously:

What's all the fuss about a seventeen-year old torso and an incipient mustache?

c. Surprise:

I never realized that he had such a superb physique!

4. A ragged beggar

a. Sympathetically:

He's just an unfortunate bit of flotsam that life has washed aside.

b. Jocosely:

This reeking old derelict has been washed up on an alcoholic tide!

c. Sanctimoniously:

Thank Heaven that I have not thus sullied my own character.

5. An orphan child

   a. Eagerly:

      Give us the little lone nestling to fill our aching old hearts.

   b. Heartlessly:

      Turn the howling little beggar over to our institutions.

   c. Morosely:

      Begging for affection, he has wilted under the dryness of human hearts.

6. A new girl in the neighborhood

   a. Philosophically:

      Her pale blonde piquancy spells oblivion for the rest of us retiring females.

   b. Alarm:

      Something must be done to stop this blond menace!

   c. Appreciatively:

      Sky-blue eyes, sunlit tresses, a jewelled smile--what more could mere man wish?

4.

It's Your Turn Now

Let's see what <u>you</u> can do now! Here are a number of people that you may know personally or that you have heard of. How do you feel about them, and if you decided to become vocal, what would you say? There are

words suggested for each emotion, but use your own if they express your thoughts better.

1. The absent member of a bridge club

   a. Venomously:

      (frowsy, slattern, ignoramus, delude, swindle, uncouth, spiteful, hateful)

   b. Affectionately:

      (model, vigorous, vivacious, sincere, frank, unaffected)

   c. Morosely:

      (dismal, unpretentious, dismay, ailing)

2. The captain of the football team

   a. Admiration (from a man's viewpoint):
      (upstanding, stalwart, robust, sturdy, integrity)

   b. Admiration (from a woman's point of view):
      (physique, broadshouldered, masterful, powerful, chivalrous)

   c. Sarcastically:
      (picayune, unscrupulous, reckless, blatant)

3. The leading lady in the school play

   a. Cordially:
      (superb, majestic, graceful, slender, astounding, technique)

   b. Yearningly:
      (aspire, example, soar, improve, admire, worship)

   c. Jealously:
      (fair, inexperienced, improvement, common run, gauche)

4. Someone whose school work is better than yours

   a. Unhappily:
      (dejected, regret, depressed, melancholy, gloomy)

b. Spitefully:
(detest, overbearing, cheats, arrogant, haughty)

c. Tolerantly:
(brilliant, merits, edify, superior, perfection)

5. The good-looking lad at the corner drugstore

a. Merrily:
(jauntily, dapper, gay, spruce)

b. Angrily:
(garish, callow, stupid, clumsy)

c. Coquettishly:
(beguiling, roguish, captivating, enthrall)

5.

"A Rose By Any Other Name"

True, it might smell as sweet, but who would bother to find out about its odor if it were named skunk cabbage? In a similar manner, well-chosen words lend glamour to your stories. Below are a number of words and phrases followed by several picture words. Try putting them together to make vivid sentence pictures.

Example: the stars

twinkling
peering
brilliant

1. the roses

fragrant
perfumed
budding

2. the hills

ancient
rolling
receding

3. bicycle

broken-down
bespattered
shining

4. piano

battered
grand
well-used

5. boy

sad
rough
worrying

6. woman

feeble
energetic
courageous

7. thief

treacherous
tormented
wicked

8. car

shining
mud-stained
speeding

[illegible] of the Inner Ear

[illegible], it might easily be asked, why the [illegible] [illegible] at [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. It is a [illegible] [illegible], self-[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible] a [illegible] of [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. The [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

Answer:

[illegible]

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

1. [illegible]	2. [illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
3. [illegible]	4. [illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
5. [illegible]	6. [illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
7. [illegible]	8. [illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]

9. <u>cat</u>

lost
trembling
pitiful

10.. <u>a little girl</u>

hungry
shivering
bold

6.
The Next Step

You've just dressed up a few words, so try the same thing on these sentences.. Always use your own words if they give a better picture.

1. The sun was setting behind the hills.

blazing
dying
golden

purple
rounded
ancient

2. Suddenly,, the moon came out from behind a cloud.

new
silvery
pale

dark
fleecy
thin

3.. A little girl was jumping rope..

chubby
happy
awkward

gaily
soberly
merrily

4.. Magellan sailed his ships across the Pacific..

gallant
courageous
valiant

wide
calm
endless

5. The witch put a spell on the child..

cruel	wretched
merciless	unhappy
inhuman	weeping

6. Flowers grew in the meadows..

gay	happy
brilliant	green
tiny	wide

7.. The trees swayed in the breeze.

whispering	autumn
graceful	evening
restless	mischievous

8. Birds called to each other..

night	noisily
happy	mysteriously
singing	melodiously

9. The man walked down the street.

tired	empty
huge	crowded
thin	quiet

10. The janitor emptied the basket.

vigorous	great
pleasant	immense
hard-working	overflowing

11.. When he heard the song, he looked up.

sweet	anxiously
merry	quickly
thrilling	happily

12. Next, the camel came along.

plodding	drowsily
awkward	hastily
nodding	thoughtfully

Character and Action

It really is fun, picking the right word. You can turn a hero into a villain or a coquette into a shrew, almost with the stroke of your pen. Here's what you can do with action words.

1. Miss Vivian came down the street.

   trotted

   swooped

   charged recklessly

2. The airplane passed by my window.

   drifted aimlessly

   roared

   soared

3. Her father walked along the avenue.

   strutted

   strolled

   rambled

4. Mrs. Delane sat on the chair.

   threw herself

   eased herself into

   collapsed

5. They talked for a long while..

chattered

gossiped

argued

6. The children ran toward their father.

raced

scrambled

advanced

7. Tom touched his older brother.

beat

hugged

plagued

8.. They were pleased with the good news.

delighted

gladdened

They rejoiced at...

9. Rover had seen an unfriendly dog.

observed

recognized

perceived

10. He could not govern his temper.

control

bridle

restrain

8.
How Others Do It

Sometimes it helps to see what types of words other people use. Choose the paragraph that gives the better picture. List the well-chosen words because it may give you ideas.

I. In a tiny hamlet nestling in the shade of the great cliffs lived Lame Peter, the goat boy. Peter's family had lived in this beautiful, mountainous country for hundreds of years and not one had ever left its verdant valleys. Now, after ten, quiet years, Lame Peter was going to the great hospital many long, exciting miles from home where wonder-working surgeons were going to straighten his poor, crippled leg. So many thoughts crowded the young heart that the tears rolled down his thin, brown cheeks when his mother told him the great news.

In a village in the mountains lived a lame boy named Peter who took care of goats. Peter's family had lived in this country for years and not one had ever left

its valleys. And now, Lame Peter was going to the hospital, miles from home where the surgeons were going to fix his leg. So many thoughts were in his heart that he cried when his mother told him the news..

II. The horse wandered up and down the road looking for his master. Where could he be? Less than an hour ago he had told Old Tim to wait for him and he would be back in a few minutes. Wise Tim thought that something must have happened to Mr. Star so he started to look for him. He paused outside each house as he came, and whinnied, but no one paid any attention to him. At last there was nothing to do but go home. As he went along the road, he heard a sound. Old Tim stopped suddenly because he knew that voice. Going over to the side of the road he found his master lying in the ditch.

The puzzled horse wandered aimlessly up and down the dusty road looking for his lost master. Where could he be? Less than an hour ago he had told Old Tim to wait for him and he would be back in a few minutes. The wise old horse sensed that something must have happened to Mr. Star, so he started to look for him. Patiently,, he paused outside each of the scattered houses and whinnied questioningly,, but no one paid any attention to him. At

last there was nothing to do but to go home. As he plodded sadly down the familiar road he heard a low moaning. Old Tim stopped suddenly because he recognized a beloved voice. Crossing to the side of the road, he found his kind master covered with blood and lying in a ditch.

Exercises

on

Sentences

Sentence Sense
Complex Sentences
Compound Sentences
Compound-Complex Sentences

Why Bother With Sentences?

Of course, you could continue for the rest of your life writing as you did in the early grades. Practically every time you write, however, it's for someone to read, so it's a worthwhile effort to convey clearly the idea you have in mind. So many of us don't do this. What seems so emphatic in your mind, comes out on paper flat and dull. Why? You haven't learned the secret of emphasis. While there is no "open sesame", there are a few helps that really work.

Often your ideas are good and so is your vocabulary, but your sentences are short and choppy, or long and straggling. An important idea is so hidden in a maze of minor details that the emphasis is lost. Two ideas seem to you to be equally important, but you don't know how to present them--and so the list of snags would continue.

There <u>are</u> ways of writing sentences that will give your ideas the attention they deserve. There is help for the endless monotony of unvaried short sentences, and hope for the uncertain relation of ideas. The pages that follow were written for the purpose of helping you to understand some of these ways.

Perhaps you really would like to improve your writing, but the thought of the grammar involved fills you with dismay. However, all the suggestions that follow

are made without reference to the ordinary grammatical terms you might expect to find. Writing really is not the nightmare that some of you have in mind!

Sentence Sense

SENTENCE SENSE

1.

A Penny For Your Thoughts

Perhaps you feel that they aren't worth that much, or perhaps you would demand a larger price than one little copper coin. At any rate whether you're going to sell stories to magazines or whether you write only to apply for a job, you need to use complete sentences. In the first place, your public will need to know what you are talking about (unless you become famous!) and in the second place, your future employer would like to know what you are applying for. Here are a few devices that will help you to guard against the incomplete sentence, and a few facts that you may find useful.

1. A sentence is a group of words <u>that expresses a complete thought</u>. (The underlined section is important because <u>any</u> group of words is <u>not</u> a sentence.) When a complete thought is expressed, the words then <u>stand alone</u>. They do not need the support of any other words.

2. To show the difference between a complete sentence and a group of words ask yourself:

   a. What is the most important thing that the sentence is talking about?

   b. What is happening to it?--or--What is it doing?

If a sentence has these two parts, then it can be said

to stand alone. It is truly a sentence and not a group of words.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

1. The great halfback strutted along with the prettiest coed on the campus.
   a. The most important thing that the sentence is talking about is the halfback. While the coed is mentioned, it is the halfback who is more important. (The coed enters to lend atmosphere!)
   b. Now we look for what the football star is doing. He is "strutting along with the prettiest coed on the campus."

The words in illustration No. 1, therefore, combine to form a correct sentence. They can stand alone. They need no support of other words. The thought is complete.

2. The crippled plane flew crazily in its pathetic attempt to make a successful landing.
   (Figure this out for yourself before you read the explanation.)
   a. What is the one most important thing in the sentence? (the plane)
   b. What did it do? (flew crazily, etc.)
   (The two necessary parts of a sentence are here, so you know that the thought is complete.

3. The plane flew. (This sentence is used purposely to show that the length is unimportant in determining whether or not there is a complete thought.)

   a. The most important thing in the sentence is the plane. We have, therefore, the first part of a sentence. Let's look for the second.

   b. What did this thing do? (It flew). Very definitely it says, "The plane flew.", so as definitely we may call it a sentence. It is a complete thought; that is, it stands alone.

4. He did. (Here is another short sentence that might bother you.)

   a. What is the most important thing in the sentence? (There isn't much choice!) It has to be the word <u>he</u>.

   b. What does this thing do? It is not clear in the sentence what <u>particular</u> thing he did, but we are told that he <u>did</u> (something). No more is necessary for a complete sentence.

2.

Something's Wrong Here!

See if you can find out. If the sentence is correct and can really stand alone when it is read orally, mark it right. Use a cross to show those that are not true sentences.

Examples: (Incomplete) When the super-fortress returned from the oriental inferno.

(Incomplete) The weather-beaten old farmer trudging aimlessly along.

(Complete sentence) Half-drugged with fatigue, the wounded pilot stumbled into the ancient courtyard.

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1. As the great cat crept forward his muscles rippled rhythmically under his tawny coat.
2. The salesman with a blue-green coat and just a touch of waistline.
3. Went strolling airly along the busy avenue of the great city.
4. Turbulent flood waters surged forward with ugly monotony.
5. Long crisp stalks of celery just waiting to be crunched.
6. He made a studious analysis of the oleomargarine with a practiced tongue.
7. Stagnant waters steamed under the burning surveillance of a tropic sun.
8. The agent strutted pompously as he carried the payroll money to the poorly-clad men.
9. Wind-swept meadows, rain-washed forests, and racing clouds.
10. Had come through the tortuous refugee route of the

underground.

11. When Lorrie made a basket that memorable night in May.

12. The lonesome sailor stared in awed admiration at the twinkling figure of the gay young dancer as she sped down the glistening ice.

13. Long, lazy, and lean, he slept in the leaves like some torpid animal.

14. The gay young redbreast chirping cheerfully to his mate through long silver lines of rain.

15. She was such a "vision of delight" that he couldn't help coughing gently as she wafted her perfumed way down the sleepy old street.

3.

Can You Tell Stories?

If you heard the beginning of a good story, could you finish it? The groups of words that follow could each be the start of a story. How would you finish these groups to make complete sentences and to tell a good story? It would be interesting to compare yours with the rest of the class to see how many different endings could be written for the same sentence.

1. When the night suddenly blazed with light

Possible Endings

a. people fled into their cellars as ants into their holes in the ground.

b. we knew that the aurora borealis had begun its majestic display of light.

c. the crowd noisily proclaimed the opening of the fair.

You are asked to make only one ending for each sentence, but make others if you wish.

1. As the first vibrant strains of their school song were heard
2. If the malevolent rhythm of the tom-tom is heard tonight
3. When cherry blossoms have covered winter's ugly scars
4. Then the slim young lieutenant with the shattered jaw and the useless arm
5. Whoever is peering through that keyhole
6. Fluttering pink skirts, yellow bobbing curls, and a quick merry step
7. With steely eye and belligerent jaw
8. Listless marsh grass waving wanly in the fading light
9. As the lean, athletic figure swung virilely down the street
10. Until democracy shall cease to be and liberty lies dead
11. With the ancient blunderbuss grasped tightly in his hands
12. While they pried open the clenched icy fist

13. As the crazed armorer drew back the rusty trigger

14. With the canal a carpet of moonlight and the gondola a chariot of dreams

15. When the angry crowd was in a tempestuous mood

4.
One Little Word!
(addition)

Hidden in each group of words below is a perfectly good sentence; that is, it could be a good sentence if just one word were added. Often, the word will be one of those in this list: is, are, was, were.

Examples: 1. The plane drifting quietly through endless azure space

Quite evidently, the sentence is talking about the plane, but it doesn't tell what the plane is doing. "Drifting quietly through space" describes the appearance of the plane. It is not the red plane, the blue plane, the large plane, or the small plane, but it is the "plane drifting quietly through space."

More could be added to the group of words to tell what the plane was doing, but this time we are going to try a different method. By inserting the word "was" in front of "drifting", we have a complete sentence and one that tells definitely what the plane was doing. It was drifting. Watch for the words ending in "ing" and "ed" and you will find how easy it is to correct this error.

2. (Here is a similar example, except that "ed" is used instead of "ing").

His brothers drugged into a state of hopeless resignation. (By adding "were" or "are" the group of words becomes a sentence that stands alone. His brothers <u>were</u> drugged into a state of hopeless resignation. Occasionally an ending might be changed, but for this particular page you are asked not to change anything, but, rather, to add another word.

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1. Sails billowing mildly in the gentle breeze that swept the bay
2. The pert little blonde tripping gayly down the street with apparent unconcern
3. Old Faithful gushing up from the secret, earthy recesses
4. Pitiful young figures lying broken and bloody on the battlefield
5. The slight oriental servant bowing with almost sinister grace
6. Dull, hopeless eyes outlined heavily with mascara
7. A blind refugee stumbling through alien, shell-cratered fields
8. Both lads sparring verbally to be the favorite escort
9. The indolent youth fatigued at the very thought of work

10. The whole of fifty cents enclosed in a grimy, twisted little hand
11. The conceited macaw preening himself endlessly with an eye to mating
12. His patient old father almost maddened with the fiery pain
13. Swift, iridescent figures darting with incredible speed through the slime of the murky pool
14. Sir Malcom's shining sword wrenched from his hand by the cowardly Lawson
15. Great giants of men warped in mind and body

5.
Another Little Word
(subtraction)

If addition will do it, so will subtraction!

This time you will be given groups of words which can be turned into complete sentences merely by <u>omitting</u> one word.

Examples:

1. Incomplete

   a. As the foul ball sped through the air barely missing the noses of the gasping crowd.

   Corrected

   b. The foul ball sped through the air barely missing the noses of the gasping crowd.

   (<u>As</u> has been omitted, and the sentence stands complete.)

2. Incomplete

a. Because her wilful son had obeyed the alluring call of the sea which thundered continually against the great chalk cliffs near their tiny cottage .

(Probably when you have gone this far, you have forgotten all about that little word <u>because</u> at the beginning of the sentence. If you have, go back now and get rid of it; otherwise, your sentence is not complete.)

Corrected

b. Her wilful son had obeyed the alluring call of the sea which thundered continually against the great chalk cliffs near their tiny cottage.

DANGER: When you are correcting your compositions by using this method, be careful that you do not change the sense of the sentence.

1. When her golden, sun-drenched curls moved gently in the sleepy summer breeze
2. Until the spring birds came back to the blackened, twisted trees, their homes of last season
3. Where the birches stretched their slim young arms, white brides of the forest
4. While the great church bells pealed violently sending their warning down the stricken valley
5. As the scrawny urchin wiggled his dirty little fingers in derision
6. Because rigid tradition and custom forbade any woman

to appear unveiled before the face of man

7. Although his delicate mother had never before worked with her lovely white hands

8. While Hal waited expectantly at the foot of the stairs for his new sweetheart to appear

9. Because his haughty pride would not let him show his honest heartbreak

10. If the ancient chief saw the smoke signal curling ominously on the horizon

11. Although he had raced with every fiber of his being tensed, to catch the soaring ball

12. When his adamant father first caught Freddie using his best razor

13. As the sailor peered anxiously through the thickening yellow fog

14. Where the battling troops had hurled their bloody way to victory

15. Because his excuse had failed to appease the noisy, ranting woman

[illegible]

1. [illegible]
2. [illegible]
3. [illegible]
4. [illegible]
5. [illegible]
6. [illegible]
7. [illegible]
8. [illegible]
9. [illegible]
10. [illegible]

Complex sentences

COMPLEX SENTENCES

1.

Where's the Emphasis?

Sometimes short sentences are what you want to gain a certain effect, but not always. Generally, by comgining two or more of these short sentences you can get more emphasis where you need it. Try this.

In each exercise blend the two sentences into a whole by introducing one of them with any of the following words: ("wh" words) when,, where, while, who, whose, which. By doing this you are making one thought more important than the other. Remember! Introduce the thought that is less important with the suggested words; that is, make it a group of words instead a sentence. Keeping the more important thought in the complete sentence gives it greater emphasis.

Example:

The statements in a. are correct but they don't state Rod's predicament so strongly as the sentence which follows.

a. Rod was ready for the dance. He made the awful discovery that the haberdasher had sent him the wrong suit.

b. When Rod was ready for the dance, he made the awful discovery that the haberdasher had sent him the wrong suit.

Blending the two ideas in one sentence shows a closer re-

lationship than in the first example. The important idea that Rod made an awful discovery is kept in the complete sentence, and the lesser idea is expressed as a group of words beginning with "when". (Perhaps you prefer to emphasize some other point. If so, just remember how to do it.)

1. The air suddenly mushroomed with paratroopers. The emaciated survivors cheered weakly.

2. A rowdy crow voiced stridently his utter contempt. The farmer labored at a puny scarecrow.

3. The dance was at its turbulent peak. Tony, the Mexican, leaped forward in a fury of Latin rhythm.

4. At his father's deathbed stood the frail young prince. He was to govern the nation so torn with hate and revolt.

5. The gnarled old farmer surveyed the sturdy stone house. He had built it in his vigorous youth.

6. The children played in the old attic. The gale lashed noisily at the house.

7. Rising clumsily to his unsteady feet came the baby. He had just taken his first steps.

8. Spring came to Burchfield. The long, flower-scented evenings were filled with gay young voices.

9. There was only a gaping shell hole. His buddy had been standing there a moment before.

10. The grieving Midas looked at his miser's hands. Their greedy power had turned his little daughter into a golden image.

11. They were waiting for sealed orders. The tension rose almost to the breaking point.

12. Five young rookies peered eagerly at the rockbound coast. They were to land there for the first time.

13. People huddled in the doorway. The pickpocket's hands darted in darted in dishonest skill.

14. The ancient stars shone benevolently on the age-old garden. The garden had witnessed the wooing of many a young queen.

15. Shop shutters flew open, glaring lamps were lighted, and from the old tavern a gust of gay, crude music burst forth. The cowhands poured dustily into town.

2.
More Help

Here is a second group of words that you will find helpful: <u>that</u>, <u>as</u>, <u>because</u>, <u>for</u>, (meaning because), <u>if</u>, <u>although</u>, <u>than</u>, <u>until</u>, <u>after</u>. Use these words to join the following sentences into smoother statements.

1. She could not go to the dance. Jean was fretful and sullen.

2. He trudged down the shabby hall. His heart was heavy with the weight of undeserved failure.

3. With a timid happy smile he accepted the treasured skates. So many others had unsuccessfully coveted them.

4. No one opened the old board door. He hammered and roared with a terrifying noise.

5. The great leering monster sounded the golden gong. They threw open the doors immediately.

6. Appreciate the little bald-headed gentleman. His smile hides a thousand cares.

7. With a great creaking and whining of ropes the old sea chest was lowered into the dingy. The dingy was barely sea-worthy.

8. The wiry little natives were pushed back. They conceived new plans for harassing the enemy.

9. He was just about too lazy to live. He lived half-starved in the squalor of a filthy mountain shack.

10. Old Juba had a flare for dancing. He would never come out when he thought the crowd was watching him.

11. The broken-hearted mother pleaded with the judge. Her only son had been condemned to the gallows.

12. His hands were always filled with doubtful money. He was a wastrel and a cad.

13. A smile lighted up the lovely old face. It was dearest in all the world to me.

14. The gambler wore down his nails to the quick. He watched his mare win.

15. They had miscalculated the distance. The valiant explorers failed to reach the long-sought waterhole.

3.

How Good Is Your Imagination?

If you have to write a story for class, here are fifteen suggestions. We'll start the sentence but you finish it. First, think of the missing part as a complete sentence. Next, join it with the thought suggested, by using the connecting word already given. (You may have to change the new part slightly to make it fit). This is what happens.

1. Until..... he
(the dawn came in a riot of flaming glory),
had fearfully expected a night attack.

2. I would rather crash than.....
(never to have known the sweet, keen joy of flying.)

1. The monotonous dribble of rain would surely have spoiled my plans if.....
2. With all her pretty patter she was less prepared than .....
3. The night wind screamed and howled in predatory glee until.....
4. I could neither wake happily or sleep in peace after....
5. If....., throw every stick that you have on the fire.

6. Until....., her every gesture, her very voice will haunt you forever.
7. After....., dazed soldiers walked leadenly through the ranks of their dead.
8. For all her aching poverty she was far happier than.....
9. After..... ....., the penguins stumped their silly way across the barrier ice.
10. If....., then Pedro will have black bread and cheese again tonight.
11. The cringing thief would neither talk nor eat until.....
12. After....., the great ship sailed into the harbor like some great bird skimming the waves.
13. The monkey screeched with operatic energy until.....
14. If....., let him come and challenge the prince.
15. Tenuous strands of ectoplasm seemed to proclaim her a spirit until.....

4.

You, Too, Can Do It

It isn't so difficult as you think to smooth out a choppy story. See what happens in the illustration and then try it yourself. You won't have to change all the sentences. Remember: "wh" words, that, as, because, for, if, although, than, after.

Choppy:

A silver arrow went winging its way through the air. Night relinquished its hold upon the universe. Purple clouds rolled their way into infinity. This happened when dawn first showed her lovely face. Birds sang their matins sleepily. Morning shown full and clear upon the earth. Finally the birds were convinced of day. Their chiming knew no end. The trees too had stretched their leafy arms. Flowers washed their pretty faces in dew. All the world was awake and calling. Man turned off his alarm and went to sleep again!

Better:

A silver arrow went winging its way through the air as night relinquished its hold upon the universe. Purple clouds rolled their way to infinity when dawn first showed her lovely face. Birds sang their matins sleepily until morning shown full and clear upon the earth. When

they were truly convinced of day, their chiming knew no end. The trees, too,, stretched their leafy arms,, while flowers washed their pretty faces in dew. All the world was awake and thrilling to the call of dawn. Man turned off his alarm and went to sleep!

(Here the short sentence is better because it brings the reader to a surprise ending.)

1. Of course every girl in the school wanted to tag Larry. The Tag Dance started. They all wanted to dance with him. He had won three games in a row for Ashley. The dance was announced. There was a rush in Larry's direction.. Unfortunately they had not reckoned with their victim. He was---astonishing fact---extremely bashful. He loved to buck a fierce tackle on the field. A feminine assault was a different story. They were almost upon him. Young Larry made one mad leap. They looked in amazement at the broken glass. There had been a perfectly good window before.

2. We crossed the river that stormy night. We walked right into an enemy trap. They had fortified an old barn. Every possible opening seemed loaded with weapons. Capture seemed the only possible solution to Hank and me. We had no intention of submitting gracefully. We wriggled across the bumpy fields on our stomachs. We needed to do a little private reconnoiter-

ing. Everything was absolutely quiet. We approached the barn. We waited two or three hours. We decided to investigate the situation more closely. The place was alive with guns. There was not one soul left to defend it. The trap was well-baited. It had never been sprung!

3. The noisy alarm insisted raucously. It was time to get up. Morning had not yet risen from her rosy bed. Even the gentle rain encouraged ten minutes' more sleep. I thought of all the comforts of my delightful bed. The enraged alarm shouted furious invectives at me, poor soul. I sprang rheumatically from bed. I could stand the insult no longer. With one bold stride I approached the demon. It dared to disturb my slumber. I turned the thing off gently. Alarms are hard to get in war time.

4. We drove home after dark. The surrounding hills were aflame with countless bonfires. Scurrying figures carried enormous armfuls of fuel. The great city needed the cleared ground for its new reservoir. A sense of defeat overcame us. We watched our hills being stripped and burned. We could not appreciate the evident beauty of the flaming night. We had seen too many tomorrows. Tomorrow our land would lie blackened and barren. The encroaching waters would hide it--and our homes--forever.

5. Tropical vines hung thick and low. Sweating men pushed their tortuous way through the thick underbrush. Overhead, militant planes hummed eternal vigilance. They watched keen-eyed for the treacherous foe. The sound was monotonous but comforting to the men. Sooner or later they would come to the place. The enemy was hiding. The sooner they found him, the better. Every battle was a step toward peace. Suddenly, their meditation ended. The sharp sound of rifle fire was heard. Weariness slipped from their straightened shoulders. The battle was on.

5.
Puzzle

Can you match the two columns correctly? There are several possible combinations, but don't be left with two parts that don't match.

1. The nagging wife turned her talents toward the plumber	a. until the murderous pirates overcame his ship
2. The soldiers watched the buzz bomb speed high	b. I will take the matter to court
3. As the ship rocked mightily in the bathtub	c. the refugee continued his perilous journey through the enemy lines
4. The swarthy captain had never known	d. while his wife draped dress materials around his lanky frame
5. His exasperation knew no bounds	e. the hungry beasts leaped forward

6. If she gossips any more about my husband

7. She stood there startled andsullen

8. Ben stood in harassed dismay

9. The ancient dame beat the weeping child

10. After darkness had descended hot and moist

11. Full of pride and loathing, he never returned to town

12. The spiteful old cat hissed at the forward puppy

13. When the great gates were swung open

14. Snow swirled and drifted like smoke

15. Deep into his tortured side burned the brand

f. while the judge accused her

g. who had dared to call her soul her own

h. where he had been born in unspeakable squalor

i. that had been the sport of the winds

j. the child crowed with delight

k. who promptly told her a few things unconnected with plumbing

l. as though it were hungry for destruction

m. when the great plow crowded the snow back into his ice-packed drive

n. that was to label him a slave forever

o. that had dared disturb her afternoon nap

Compound Sentences

Compound Sentences
1.
Combine Your Ideas

Here are a series of short related sentences of equal importance. There is nothing wrong with any of them, but if most paragraphs were composed of such short sentences, the result would be choppy and boring. See if you can combine both sentences in each group into a well-rounded statement. Use and, or, nor, but for the connecting word.

1. Rain fell in piercing, icy sheets. Angry and black clouds shrouded the sky.
2. A faint eerie glimmer of light showed. No other sign of human habitation was visible.
3. The clock ticked away the lonely seconds. The weeping child gave no thought to time.
4. You may follow your own foolish whim. You may accept my careful decision.
5. A fluting thrush stilled the woodland. Night availed herself of this unexpected interval.
6. Sabers clashed savagely in the battle. Excited horses neighed.
7. There were always piles of unwashed dishes. There were always nagging complaints.
8. You may dance until dawn. Come home immediately afterwards.
9. Should I help the antiquated wretch? Should he go home

himself?

10. We can make one mad dash. We can stay here and die.

11. Stubborn resistance was foolhardy. Placid resignation was worse.

12. Red-headed Landers kicked a field goal. The day was theirs!

13. Terry rooted in the mouldering leaves. The furry creature had escaped.

14. The hulking tank lurched down the slope. All the tiny garrison stayed to the last man.

15. The village coquette beckoned. All the adoring swains rushed to the summons.

2.

It Might Be Embarrassing

If you don't need a comma, why waste energy? On the other hand, a comma can do yeoman service in adjusting a precarious situation! (Remember that a comma is not generally needed if both of the sentences to be combined are short,--unless clarity is at stake.)

Comma!

Peter chatted noisily with Betty and Jean stalked haughtily by. (Is Peter carrying on a conversation with both Betty and Jean? A comma is urgently needed to straighten out the embarrassing situation.)

No Comma!

The bugle commanded and the men arose sleepily.

(Here the meaning is clear at a glance and so a comma would be unnecessary.) In the sentences below where would <u>you</u> use commas?

1. We are going to the stable and the concert can wait.
2. Peter called his puppy and the little animal appeared.
3. The wild elephant trumpeted and his mate answered eagerly.
4. The drunkard started to fall but the policeman supported him.
5. Stricken France had lost Paris and Warsaw was wrested from Poland.
6. Submarines searehed hungrily or they brooded in savage expectation.
7. You may go Tom or Peter may go for you.
8. Fierce lights stabbed the sky and allied guns resented the invader.
9. The dying Roland sounded his horn but brave Oliver came

too late.

10. The college widow flicked an eyelash and all her swains bowed low.

11. Blood covered the snow and ice thinly veiled the tragedy..

12. The shot killed Paul and Peter was forever broken-hearted.

13. He winked archly at the maiden and colonel glared fiercely.

14. His song was jovial but his heart was heavy..

15. John will take his girl and his sister will drive..

3.
Puzzle

Rules of Play: 1. The player must take a sentence from column one and find another in column two that is equal both in importance and in the relation of ideas.

2. Write the two as one sentence, joining them with a semicolon.

Column One

1. Excitement was too deadly a draught for the young athlete.

2. A checked suit vouched loudly for its owner.

3. A spearhead of geese cleaved the cloud-strewn cloud.

4. Across the endless plains swept the stampeding cattle.

5. The bedraggled puppy whined pitifully for attention.

6. Old Vesuvius was rampaging again.

7. Marbles and tops appeared as if by magic.

8. The old slave crept fearfully toward the door.

9. The team, to a man, saluted winsome Winnie.

10. The English professor had found the reason for his students' unusual fervor.

11. Coiled in the adjacent drive was the dreaded rattler.

12. His house was well-designed.

13. Boasting noisily, the human-fly would heed no advice.

14. Bashfully, Peter stood in the shadow.

15. Joy shone in the face of the bomber pilot.

16. His worn body was limp with fatigue.

Column Two

1. A red tie screamed violent affirmation.

2. Hate seemed to radiate from his ugly length.

3. His eyes were half-closed with sleep.

4. The cries of the crowd were manna to him.

5. Grown-ups paused to reminisce.

6. His drive was smooth and graceful.

7. Death seemed imminent to the retreating horsemen.

8. Spring's couriers were already on their way.

9. His mission had been successful.

10 He lost his head and the race, too.

11 His suit was old and shabby.

12 The master was in an ugly mood.

13. His plea was not made in vain.

14. Victory was secure that day.

15. The sullen roar was ominous.

4.

You Need Balance

Some of these sentences are properly joined to make one long, well-balanced sentence. Others should never have been welded into one sentence for the effect they are supposed to achieve. Check the ones that are correct.

Examples

1. Effect: Amusement

a. Effective-- (We hope!)

The man's obese figure leaped clumsily to follow the frolicking dancers, but he soon discovered that his bulk was not conducive to grace.

b. Effective--

The breathless audience followed the soprano's perilous ascent, and at long last she reached high "C".

c. Does not achieve effect sought--

Tittering maidens giggled at his sloppy socks, but soon the blazing sun had set.

Try These:

Effect: Sorrow

1. The dying soldier breathed a quick prayer, but suddenly he heard the bugles.
2. Tina watched the tiny body of her pet wash ashore; she stayed a long time.
3. The trembling citizens gathered in the old stone church for refuge, but the enemy savagely mowed them down with machine guns.
4. During the long, cold nights the crippled mother sewed endlessly to provide food for her children, but the heartless employer paid her only a few paltry cents.
5. The young wife grieved endlessly for her soldier husband and she no longer worked.
6. With clumsy wit he poked fun at the weeping child, but she could stand the baiting no longer.

Effect: Beauty

1. Pink-petalled blossoms lined the country lanes with May, and bluebirds, delirious with spring, called in ecstasy.
2. Polly would watch the brook tumble and gurgle along, or she would go to the orchard and hear the bird calls.
3. His masculine charm lay somewhat in the Grecian conture of his features, but he was bad-tempered.
4. Firs threw purple shadows on the untrammeled snow, and

streams pencilled long lines of silver across the frozen meadows.

5. Her silver-hair crowned the sweet old face; her pink apron was badly torn.

6. The freezing rain had sheathed every branch with a shining coat, but the day was unpleasant.

5.

Balance in Action

This time you're going to try out the sentences you've been using. The sentences in these stories are too short. You don't have to change every sentence, but only if you need smoothness or balance.

Example: (Sentences too short)

a. The murderous cannonade had ceased. A hail of bullets continued the challenge. Tim crawled over to his wounded captain. Weakly, he sought to comfort him. The dying man raised his tired eyes. With a smile he thanked the private. Death came soon. It was not unwelcome.

b. (Smoother)

The murderous cannonade had ceased, but a hail of bullets continued the challenge. Tim crawled over to his wounded captain, and, weakly, he sought to comfort him. The dying man opened his tired eyes, and with a smile he thanked the private. Death came soon, but it was not unwelcome. (Example "b." blends smaller units into a smoother, well-balanced whole.)

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1. You have an irrevocable choice. You must make it now. There is the deserter's cowardly trail. Here is honest devotion to humdrum duty. Of course, the way is rough. There is always the peace that comes from a

satisfied conscience. A coward may live in luxury. His heart is a turmoil of fear.

2. The plane soared upward. The sun blazed against its silver sides. Seemingly, this was a routine flight. The army was using only the camouflage value of routine. Few of the men suspected the deadly mission. A frightened saboteur quivered in his traitorous boots. His mission had failed. Now there was only death from both sides.

3. Was he right? Was he wrong? It couldn't possible be Ruth. It certainly looked like her. She'd been such a gawky infant. This blonde was all grace and allure. It is Ruthie. She certainly has changed. He'd better engage her free time immediately. Someone else would get ahead of him. Maybe he ought to share his discovery. He'd seen her first!

4. The sea churned endlessly. The sky was thick with torn cloud fragments. Suddenly, the picture changed. There was no melting the angry mood of the elements. Searing talons of light now pushed aside the gloom. The scene was more terrifying than before. Man stood still in his path. His heart forgot to beat. Was he alive? Was this death? The earth upheaved with the terrific explosion of the V-bomb. Its answer was, "Death".

5. Dixie tossed her bright hair lightly. She could not hide the pain in her eyes. Tom was walking home with a

new girl.. She didn't care! He was going to take her to the Sports Dance. Now, he might take the new girl, instead. They were coming toward her. She wanted to run away. He could have gone ahead. He could have pretended not to see her. It would have been less humiliating. Here they were now. "Meet my cousin, Dixie." Dixie's heart sang again..

Compound-Complex Sentences

Compound-Complex

1.
Getting Longer

Here's another idea that will help you to weld two or three short sentences into one. In the following groups, keep two of the sentences complete thoughts joined by connecting words. The others, however, may be added as groups of words with an introductory word (as, after, "wh", etc.) as long as the main idea of each sentence is not changed.

Examples:

1. Sam fell into the audience. The basketball crowd roared its mirth, and the sturdy bleechers shook with the merry rhythm.

   (Better) When Sam fell into the audience, the basketball crowd roared its mirth, and the sturdy bleechers shook with the merry rhythm.

   (or) The basketball crowd roared its mirth, and the sturdy bleechers shook with the merry rhythm when Sam fell into the audience.

2. When the gong was rung, the two wrestlers continued their Herculean antics. They entertained the hysterical audience.

   (Better) When the gong was rung, the two wrestlers continued their Herculean antics and entertained

the hysterical audience..

1. The podgy little man seldom appeared in the daytime,, but his wide pale face was often seen at the window.. His enemies could see him too easily in the daytime.
2. Lannie wore a zoot suit for the first time. His mother fainted and his father was taken to the hospital with a cerebral hemorrhage..
3. She clung grace fully to her escort's arm, and the crowd silently applauded her charm. Her escort never knew how tenaciously she clung to his arm..
4. Grandfather spent his time spinning extraordinary yarns for the neighbors or he sat by the fire and killed imaginary fleas with his feet. Grandfather was a very old man.
5. Our dog had been everyone's pet. He was very jealous of the baby, and he could hardly stand the puppy next door.
6. The creeping fog masked the filth of the street, but it added unspeakably to the menace. This menace seemed to brood over the street..
7. Duller morning gave way to duller noon. Night was always a tragedy. Her son had been killed in action.
8. Camouflaged battleships saluted thunderously, and soaring planes paid dangerous, daring homage.. The

heroic admiral walked down the gang plank.

9. Wind-swept, rain-driven spring advanced across the fields. Weary mortals smiled up at the lovely victor. She had engaged winter in mortal combat.

10. Big Son was coming home. Mammy flicked her lashes to keep the tears in place, and Pappy chopped furiously down by the old wood pile.

2.

Becoming Expert?

Perhaps it's a little early yet, but here are some more ideas to manipulate. This is similar to the last exercise, but it is a bit longer..

Example 1: An ominous calm lurked over the heaving waters. Ships were hastening to the harbor.. Uneasy birds deserted the lowering skies..

Three possible arrangements:

a. Ships were hastening to the harbor as the ominous calm lurked over the heaving water, and uneasy seabirds had deserted the lowering skies..

b. As an ominous calm lurked over the heaving waters, ships were hastening to the harbor, and uneasy seabirds deserted the lowering skies.

c. Uneasy seabirds had deserted the lowering skies and ships were hastening to the harbor as an ominous calm lurked over the heaving waters..

Example 2: Giggling girls stumbled out of the Mirror House. Balloon men hawked their fragile wares. The balloons were all colors of the rainbow. Coney Island was in its heyday.

Three possible arrangements:

a. When Coney Island was in its heyday, giggling girls stumbled out of Mirror Houses, and balloon men hawked their fragile wares that were all colors of the rainbow.

b. Giggling girls stumbled out of Mirror Houses and balloon men hawked their fragile wares that were all colors of the rainbow when Coney Island was in its heyday.

c. When giggling girls stumbled out of Mirror Hbuses and balloon men hawked their fragile wares that were all colors of the rainbow,. Coney Island was in its heyday.

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1. The Northwest limited roared through the tunnel.. It panted up long, mountain grades. A treacherous saboteur was on the train. He tried to wreck it..

2. From the plains below arose great clouds of dust.. We were peering curiously from the plane. Figures of cowboys were everywhere.. It was round-up time on the Bar X Ranch..

3. The ford over the swollen river was dangerous. Drowned cattle were swept down stream. Many rugged cavalrymen crossed with their horses. The horses shied nervously. Other soldiers returned to help their comrades..
4. Dishes crashed in the kitchen. Clouds of blue-grey smoke swept into the dining room. The angry cook decided to leave. She didn't like synthetic butter..
5. The air was heavy with ecstatic sighs.. It was rumored that a favorite crooner was coming to town. Youth offered devotional incense. Mothers tried to keep forgotten suppers from drying up.
6. He really had a good-looking tie. The girls said that it made his eyes look blue. The girls embarrassed him terribly.
7. He was a rollicking old tar. He was a bit bow-legged. It did not detract from his charm. He had buried three wives. He had hopes of another.
8. Wayne was the handsome captain of the football team. Every girl in the school wanted to go to the prom with him. Wayne paid no attention to anyone except dull little Cynthia Morris. He took her to the dance..
9. A dull roar startled the town. Flashes of flame paled the fading sunset. They seemed to lick the evening star. The left wing of the powder plant suddenly exploded..

10. The advancing avalanche roared its hoarse challenge. The shepherd's family fled. The hungry snow was still unsated. It lurched on its murderous path with ribald mockery.

3.
It Makes a Difference

It <u>does</u> make a difference if your sentences are well-planned or if they are hit-or-miss. These sentences are intended to show you what a difference sentences can make.

1.a. (less emphatic) He invaded the avenue with checked suit and twirling cane. His brash figure exuded egotism from every inch. A self-assured strut betrayed the utmost complacency. His roving eyes followed and inventoried his fellow men. Perhaps, his little brain catalogued them because he had nothing better to do. He was so thoroughly convinced of his personal allure. He headed directly toward a charming young woman. She was standing at the corner. She paid him not the slightest attention. Piqued, he discussed the weather, her blond hair, and the latest movie. It was a decidedly

one-sided discussion. The lady was cold and silent. Shortly afterwards, a police car drove up. The unfeeling object of his devotion called gayly to the blue-coated officer who was driving, "Hi, Dad." Then she turned pleasantly to her checkered admirer. She asked sweetly, "Did you say something?" A voice far down the street replied, "No! Oh, no!" He didn't say anything! No ma'am!

1.b.
(better) As he invaded the avenue with his checked suit and twirling cane, his brash figure exuded egotism and his self-assured strut betrayed the utmost complacency. His roving eyes inventoried his fellow men, and perhaps, his little brain catalogued them because he had nothing better to do. Because he was convinced that no one could resist such manly charms as his, he headed directly toward a charming young woman, but she paid him not the slightest attention. Piqued, he discussed the weather, her blond hair, and the latest movie, but it was a decidedly one-sided conversation because the girl made no answer. Shortly, a car drove up and the unfeeling object of his devo-

tion called gayly to the blue-coated officer who was driving, "Hi, Dad". Then she turned pleasantly to her checkered admirer and asked, "Did you say something?" A voice far down the street replied, "No! Oh, no!" He didn't say anything! No, ma'am!

2.a. (Less emphatic) A mouldering odor of decay hung around the clearing. A malevolent spirit seemed to lurk inside the squalid cabins. We approached from the outer world. We had expected to be halted half a dozen times because we were revenue men. No one molested us. Suddenly a cracked voice cackled at us, "Ain't no one home. Ain't ben no one home fer fifty years." The announcement was followed by a rusty, rasping laugh. It made the pleasant day seem suddenly cold. Our one interest was to ge t out of that unholy spot. Later, in the village we heard the story. She really had lived in that forsaken spot for fifty years. It was easy to believe. She spoke to no one except an occasional stray cur.

2.b. (better) A mouldering odor of decay hung around the

clearing,, and a malevolent spirit seemed to lurk inside the squalid cabins as we approached from the outer world. We had expected to be halted half a dozen times because we were revenue men, but no one molested us. Suddenly a cracked voice cackled at us, "Ain't no one home. Ain't <u>ben</u> no one home fer fifty years." The announcement was followed by a rusty, rasping laugh that made the pleasant day seem suddenly cold and our one interest was to get out of that unholy spot. Later, in the village we heard that she really had lived in that forsaken spot for fifty years. It was easy to believe that she spoke to no one except an occasional stray cur.

3.a.
(Less emphatic) We had been scouting for hours. There had been no sight of the enemy. Suddenly, he was bearing down upon us. This would be my first fight. I was nervous. Every waiting second seemed an hour. We drew his fire first. The pilot maneuvered skillfully. We were right in the middle of a fierce dogfight. I was tense,, but no longer nervous. We were fighting for life itself. Nothing else seemed to matter..

It was either kill or be killed. Each one of us had no intention of dying. We discussed it later. It was the enemy's turn. He got his.

3.b. (better)

We had been scouting for hours and there had been no sign of the enemy when, suddenly, he was bearing down upon us. Since this would be my first fight, I was nervous and every waiting second seemed an hour. We drew his fire first and then, through the pilot's skillful maneuver, we were right in the midst of a fierce dogfight. I was tense, but no longer nervous because we were fighting for life itself, and nothing else seemed to matter. It was either kill or be killed and each one of us, as we discussed it later, had no intention of dying. It was the enemy's turn. He got his.

4.a. (less emphatic)

Darkness fell abruptly over the African village. All its peaceful citizens slept quietly. The moon kept lonely watch overhead. Without warning, the slave traders burst upon the scene. The primitive si-

lence was filled with shouted curse and blasphemy. The evil white men tore husband from wife, and mother from child. Tortured cries, broken lamentations rose on wave after wave of agony. Still the traders chained their black victims. Greed for gold drove every human feeling out of their blackened hearts. One last glance at their humble homes and then these poor broken creatures walked into slavery forever.

4.b.
(better) Darkness fell abruptly over the African village and all its peaceful citizens slept quietly while the moon kept lonely watch overhead. Without warning, the slave traders burst upon the scene and the primitive silence was filled with shouted curse and blasphemy as the evil white men tore husband from wife, and mother from child. Tortured cries, broken lamentations rose on wave after wave of agony but still the traders chained their black victims as greed for gold drove every human feeling out of their blackened hearts. One last glance at their humble homes and then these

poor broken creatures walked into slavery forever..

5.a.
(less emphatic) He had never proposed before. Now he wished fervently for more practice. His knees shook so. This wasn't the way movie heroes looked when they were proposing. He didn't know just what was wrong. He was on his right knee. He had his right arm around the girl's waist. It was as far as it would go anyway. Were his knees supposed to tremble this way? What was the matter with his tongue? He couldn't get it away from the roof of his mouth. Naturally, he couldn't say anything. Poor Bob wished fervently that he could mop his hot perspiring brow. The sweat was trickling into his eyes. He had put his arm around the lady, however. He didn't know the etiquette for getting it away. He hadn't said anything yet. He distinctly heard Martha say, "Why, yes, of course, Jimmy dear!" Say! Who was doing the proposing anyway! Well, he guessed women were like that!.

5.b.
(better) He had never proposed before, but now he wished fervently for practice because his knees shook so. This wasn't the way movie heroes looked when they were proposing, but he didn't know just what was wrong. He was on his right knee and he had his right arm around the girl's waist--as far as it would go, anyway. Were his knees supposed to tremble this way? What was the matter with his tongue? He couldn't say anything because he couldn't get it away from the roof of his mouth, so naturally he said nothing. Poor Bob wished fervently that he could mop his hot, perspiring brow because the sweat was trickling into his eyes. He had put his arm around the lady,, however, and he didn't know the etiquette for getting it away. He hadn't said anything yet, but he distinctly heard Martha say, "Why, yes, of course, Jimmy, dear!" Say! Who was doing the proposing anyway! Well, he guessed women were like that!

CHAPTER III

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

These exercises have never been used with pupils in the classroom because there was no opportunity to do so. Until the pupils' reactions are recorded, however, the value of this workbook cannot be determined.

Perhaps the vocabulary is too difficult for high school seniors. On the other hand, if the work was enjoyable, the vocabulary might become a challenge to interpretation. Should this be the case, the situation would be ideal for learning, but the reverse would be true if too much difficulty caused discouragement or indifference.

Then there is the matter of sophistication. Is there too much of it? Will it annoy rather than please? Naturally, there will be a vast difference between connotative values for the adult and for those of the high school pupil. Will it be so great, however, that the sentences lose interest because the meaning is out of reach?

These and various other questions will have to be determined before this workbook accomplishes its purpose.

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